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C O N F I D E N T I A L CONAKRY 000648

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/28/2018
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [CVIS](#) [PREL](#) [ASEC](#) [GV](#)
SUBJECT: HIGH-LEVEL VISA APPLICATIONS CONTINUE AS NOVEMBER
1 ANNIVERSARY APPROACHES

REF: CONAKRY 642

Classified By: ECONOFF T. SCOTT BROWN FOR FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D)

[¶1.](#) (C) Embassy received several visa requests from high-ranking officials in the Guinean government, including from the wife of the Minister of Defense and from controversial businessman Mamadou Sylla, on 29 October. The DS-156 visa applications noted that applicants hoped to travel before November 1, the date of the national military holiday and action deadline reportedly set by coup plotters (reftel).

[¶2.](#) (C) Mamadou Sylla, a close confidant of President Conte, stated on his application that he planned to travel to Washington, D.C. on official business for meetings with the Export-Import Bank and other financiers of his company Air-Guinee, a defunct national airline that Sylla is trying to revive. Two of Sylla's colleagues from the Guinean Employers Association (Conseil National du Patronat), Vice President Salifou Camara and Director of Protocol Moctar Keita, also applied for visas, saying they planned to accompany him. Sylla's application included an official mission order from the MFA naming him president of the Patronat, a position to which many Embassy contacts believe he does not have a legitimate claim.

[¶3.](#) (C) Ms. Fatoumata Binta Camara, wife of the current Minister of Defense, stated that she will travel to the U.S. to attend a niece's wedding. Ms. Camara has traveled to the U.S. on several prior occasions.

[¶4.](#) (C) COMMENT. Today's applications add to the recent spike in high-level visa requests (reftel), and are of particular note given the near-term political uncertainty. Mamadou Sylla is a very unpopular figure in Guinea and could become a target of violence if civil strife erupts in the coming days.

END COMMENT.
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